

# JIM KOLBE

b. 6/28/1942

*"The cause for all gay persons ... will be advanced when we focus not on what sets us apart from our fellow Americans but on what we share in common."*

Congressman Kolbe is the first Republican to represent southern Arizona since statehood. He serves as Chair of the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs of the House Appropriations Committee, which funds most U.S. foreign aid programs, narcotics interdiction efforts and counter-terrorism activities. Kolbe is recognized as a leading proponent of free trade and is known for his advocacy of Social Security and immigration reforms.

Kolbe's interest in politics began early in life. At 15 he left the family ranch in Arizona to serve as a Senate page for Senator Barry Goldwater. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Northwestern University and an M.B.A. from Stanford University. He was awarded the Navy commendation medal, "V" for valor, for his service in Vietnam. Prior to his election to Congress, he served in the Arizona State Senate.

**Jim Kolbe  
(R-Arizona) has served  
in the U.S. House  
of Representatives  
since 1985, and is the  
second openly gay  
Republican member  
of the House.**

Kolbe is the only openly gay Republican serving in Congress. When he publicly acknowledged his homosexuality in 1996, he said: "This is the best day of my life, really. I feel a tremendous burden lifted. It's a relief. I'm being totally honest about myself to friends and family. It feels wonderful."

In 2000, Kolbe became the first openly gay person to address the Republican National Convention.

Currently completing his 11th term in Congress, Kolbe has announced that he will not seek reelection in 2006.

